

Message of the Week

April 22-28, 2002

“It’s time for Washington to practice fiscal discipline so that America has the resources to fight terrorism at home and abroad.”

- The **first step** Washington can take to practice fiscal discipline is to **set a budget** for fiscal year 2003.
 - The House passed a budget resolution on March 20, 2002, and sent it to the Senate on March 21, 2002.
 - The Senate has NOT passed a budget resolution.
 - The Senate has had the House’s budget resolution for 35 days (as of April 24th), yet has still not acted on it—nor has the Senate passed its own budget.
- The **second step** Washington can take to practice fiscal discipline is to **enforce budgetary restrictions**.
 - Rep. Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania will introduce legislation this week to set budget caps for discretionary spending.
 - These caps would set spending levels into law for the next five years.
 - If Congress tries to overspend, these caps would automatically make across-the-board cuts to ensure fiscal discipline.
- The **third step** Washington can take to practice fiscal discipline is to **empower the President to hold Congress in line**.
 - If Congress cannot control itself on spending, then the President should veto any non-defense appropriations bills that exceed the spending levels in the President’s budget.
 - Rep. John Sununu of New Hampshire and Budget Chairman Jim Nussle of Iowa are circulating a letter where Members pledge to sustain the President’s veto of bills with excessive spending.